

NUTRITIONIST III

Work in this class involves providing professional nutritional services with a considerable amount of time being spent in providing comprehensive, complex nutrition services to clients and patients with a variety of medical/nutritional problems: or spending a significant amount of time in supervising a small local health nutrition program concentrating in the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, Children (WIC) with limited program involvement in the areas of home health, family planning and hypertension. Work in this class is found in local health departments and throughout the university system. This level is differentiated from lower levels in the areas of program scope, supervisory accountability, and the in-depth nature of nutritional assessment and counseling. Employees provide nutritional services to clients with a multitude of medical/ nutritional problems which requires a thorough knowledge of disease pathophysiology in relation to nutritional theories and practices. Employees deal with acute, chronic, and terminally ill clients/patients who are characterized as medical high risk. Employees supervising a small nutrition program are responsible for program planning, organizing priorities and directives, recommending budgetary needs and monitoring expenditures, participating in various personnel functions, and supervising lower level nutritionists and support staff. Employees may become involved in providing training. Work may include other related assignments as determined by the management. Employees usually report to either a higher level nutritionist, clinician, or agency director.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employees providing comprehensive, complex nutrition services to clients with a variety of medical/nutritional problems utilize and demonstrate a more comprehensive knowledge of nutrition as it relates to disease pathophysiology. Employees receive the more complex, critical referrals requiring independent analysis of clients' medical condition, researching nutritional requirements of the respective medical problems, and recommending a treatment plan in concert with an interdisciplinary team approach. Employee may provide technical consultation and training to clinicians in developing the nutrition component of the care plan. Employees supervising a small nutrition program are responsible for planning program goals and objectives, participating in incorporating the nutrition program into other health department program areas and evaluating the effectiveness of program plans. Employees participate in developing clinic flow, patient referral criteria, operational standards, and procedures. Work requires the employees to develop and justify budgetary needs; coordinate and provide training and serve as a technical resource. Employees participate in the selection, evaluation, and recommendation of disciplinary action of employees, along with supervising a limited number of professional and clerical support staff. Employees spend the remaining time in direct patient services.

Intricacy - Employees providing complex nutritional services to patients with a variety of medically related problems utilize an in-depth knowledge of the field of nutrition and changing professional trends, as well as interpret medical and laboratory information in dealing with the nutritional ramification of the disease. The clients/patients are usually under the direct care of a clinician and the employees must research the disease pathophysiology, understand and apply its interrelationship to nutrition, and discuss treatment plans, dietary modifications with the clinician. Employees may have to discuss hospital referred treatment plans and interpret their application to the home environment. Employees in a supervisory capacity are responsible for incorporating agency needs and state directives into a systematic format to meet the program needs. These employees utilize nutritional guidelines and theories in dealing with clients, as well as incorporating various policies and operational procedures into their work plans.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires a thorough understanding of the theories, concepts, practices, and techniques of nutrition as it applies to a health care setting. Employees utilize this subject matter knowledge, as well as an in-depth knowledge of the program requirements in providing nutritional care and/or supervising the activities of a nutritional program.

Guidelines - Guidelines include standardized assessments, professional reference materials, nutritional program reference manuals, medical references, and professional standards. Employees independently apply these guidelines, program goals, and standards or seek advice from either a higher level nutritionist, the State Nutrition and Dietary Services branch, or an agency head.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employees who are responsible for a home health caseload independently plan their daily activities and determine the particular program scope. These employees receive administrative direction from a higher level nutritionist and receive technical advice from peers and the medical community. Employees may receive technical administrative instructions from the attending clinician. Employees responsible for supervising a small nutritional program receive administrative directives from the State Nutrition and Dietary Services Branch, Nutritional Program Consultants, and the agency director.

Nature of Review - Direct client/patient care is independently planned or planned in concert with an interdisciplinary team, and may be reviewed by other professionals. General administrative review is provided through annual monitoring visits or by a higher level nutritionist, clinician, Nutrition Program Consultant, or agency director.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions regarding comprehensive nutrition services will affect the health of the clients and/or decisions may affect the direction and priorities of the program.

Consequence of Decisions - Professional decisions may have an adverse or irreversible effect on the clients'/patients' medical and/or nutritional well being. Decisions concern program administration may affect the program purpose and impact upon the clients participating in the program.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Scope of Contacts - Work requires contact with clients, a variety of professional disciplines, and community resources.

Nature and Purpose - Employees work with clients and patients in the delivery of comprehensive and complex nutritional services. Employees work with clinicians and other health care professionals in an interdisciplinary approach to the assessment and treatment of clients/patients. Work also requires the employees to serve as a technical resource to special medical interest groups and provide training as necessary.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Employees work in either local health departments, clinical setting or home environments which may be characterized as mildly disagreeable.

Hazards - Employees are exposed to clients with a multitude of medically related problems which could pose a danger to the employee.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Thorough knowledge of principles of normal and therapeutic nutrition and drug and nutrient interaction at all stages of life. Considerable knowledge of nutrition as it impacts on disease pathophysiology. Knowledge and skill in nutrition and dietary assessment techniques (anthropometric, biochemical, clinical and dietary), and in interpretation of data. Knowledge of human behavior and techniques for effecting behavior change. Ability to supervise others. Skill in writing clear, concise entries in clients' health/medical records. Skill in the processes of interviewing and counseling. Skill in understanding individual's socio-economic status and life-styles with respect for individual differences. Skill in monitoring and maintaining quality standards of nutrition care using current standards of practice. Skill in organization and management of time and resources. Skill in oral and written communication.

Minimum Education and Experience - Bachelor's degree in foods and nutrition, public health nutrition, or dietetics from an appropriately accredited institution and two years of experience in nutrition and ADA Commission on Registration eligibility; or Master's degree in nutrition or public health nutrition from an appropriately accredited institution and one year of experience in nutrition, plus ADA Commission on Registration eligibility; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Administering the Class - Candidates should provide documentation from their respective university or college certifying Commission eligibility and/or indicating completion of an ADA approved dietetic internship. If Commission registered, candidates may provide registration number. Satisfactory completion of an ADA approved dietetic internship not receiving college credit can be treated as one full year of experience.